

Message Text

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ACTION SY-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SCCT-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 USSS-00 DRC-01 /095 W

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R 241345Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6324

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 2549

FOR RSO BEIRUT

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC, PINS

SUBJECT: ACADEMY PLOT AND POSSIBLE FEDAYEEN ACTIVITIES

REF: A. CAIRO 2499; B. CAIRO 2521

1. ADMIN OFF MET TODAY WITH SENIOR OFFICER OF STATE SECURITY DIVISION IN ATTEMPT GAIN ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONCERNING POSSIBLE FEDAYEEN ACTIVITIES. OFFICER TOLD ADMIN OFF THAT SECURITY HAD HEARD OF A THREAT INVOLVING FOREIGN EMBASSIES A FEW WEEKS AGO AND HAD STRENGTHENED SECURITY MEASURES AROUND EMBASSIES AT THAT TIME.

2. ADMIN OFF ASKED OFFICIAL WHETHER THE THREAT WAS SPECIFICALLY AIMED AGAINST THE AMERICANS OR WERE THERE OTHER EMBASSIES INVOLVED. HE SAID THAT SAUDIS AND SOME EUROPEAN EMBASSIES HAD ALSO BEEN MENTIONED. (WE HAVE BEEN TOLD BY SAUDI EMBOFF THAT GOE ADVISED THEIR SECURITY BE STRENGTHENED ON APRIL 22 AND UK EMBASSY APPEARS TO HAVE ACQUIRED
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ADDITIONAL PERIMETER GUARDS). HE DID NOT RESPOND

WHEN ASKED IF GERMANS AND ITALIANS WERE ALSO TARGETED.

3. IN EXPLANATION FOR POSSIBILITY INCREASED FEDAYEEN ACTIONS IN EGYPT, HE MENTIONED THAT THE FIVE PALESTINIANS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ROME MASSACRE WERE STILL BEING HELD IN AN EGYPTIAN PRISON AND THE FEDAYEEN WERE CONCERNED WITH THIS AS WELL AS SECRETARY'S SUCCESSES IN ME DIPLOMACY.

4. ADMIN OFF ASKED IF ATTACK ON MILITARY TECHNICAL ACADEMY WAS IN ANY WAY ASSOCIATED WITH THE FEDAYEEN THREAT AND ALSO WHETHER THE SECRETARY'S VISIT COULD BE AFFECTED BY THE THREAT. OFFICIAL SAID THAT INVESTIGATION OF THE ACADEMY PLOT HAD DISCLOSED THAT THE PLOTTERS PLANS INCLUDED THE TAKING OF HOSTAGES FROM A FOREIGN EMBASSY TO USE AS ESCAPE PAWNS, SHOULD THE MAIN GROUP OF ACADEMY PLOTTERS FAIL AND BE CAPTURED. HE LINKED THE PLAN TO TAKE HOSTAGES WITH THE EARLIER REPORT OF POSSIBLE FEDAYEEN ACTIVITIES, BUT CLAIMED THAT SINCE ALL THE ACADEMY PLOTTERS WERE NOW UNDER ARREST, THE SPECIFIC THREAT OF WHICH WE WERE WARNED YESTERDAY BY MFA NO LONGER EXISTED.

5. OFFICIAL WENT ON TO DESCRIBE ACADEMY PLOT AS FOLLOWS: HE SAID THAT LEADER OF THE PLOT WAS A STRONG PERSONALITY OF PALESTINIAN ORIGIN WHO HELD AN IRAQI PASSPORT AND WHO HAS BEEN IN EGYPT FOR ABOUT THREE YEARS. HE STARTED RECRUITING HIS FOLLOWERS WHO WERE FANATICAL YOUNG EGYPTIAN MUSLIMS ABOUT A YEAR AGO. ADMIN OFF ASKED IF FOLLOWERS WERE MEMBERS OF MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD OF THE SORT THAT HAD MADE TROUBLE AT CAIRO UNIVERSITY A YEAR OR SO AGO AND OFFICIAL REPLIED THAT THEY WERE NOT MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD. HE SAID THEY WERE MORE LIKE THE "NEW MUSLIM LEFT" AND THAT THESE YOUNG PEOPLE DID NOT REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT WAS BEHIND THE PLOT. HE SAID THE PLOTTERS' PLAN AS TO TAKE OVER THE ACADEMY, OBTAIN "WEAPONS" AND THEN ATTACK THE ASU HEADQUARTERS WHILE PRESIDENT SADAT WAS PRESENTING

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HIS "OCTOBER PAPER", TAKING HIM AS WELL AS OTHER SENIOR OFFICIALS PRESENT HOSTAGE. IF THIS PLAN FAILED, A SECOND GROUP WAS TO TAKE HOSTAGES FROM A FOREIGN EMBASSY AND USE THEM TO BARGAIN FOR THE RELEASE OF THE MAIN GROUP. THIS SECOND GROUP WAS IDENTIFIED DURING THE INVESTIGATION AND ALL PLOTTERS TOTALING APPROXIMATELY 100 HAVE BEEN ARRESTED.

6. ADMIN OFF ASKED OFFICIAL IF IT IS TRUE THAT LIBYANS WERE BEHIND PLOT. HE REPLIED THAT INVESTIGATIONS ARE STILL NOT COMPLETE, BUT IT CLEARLY IS AN OUTSIDE PLOT. THE LEADER IS A FOREIGNER. HE HAD HE BEEN SUCCESSFUL, HE COULD NOT HAVE TAKEN OVER THE LEADERSHIP. IN CLOSING THE DISCUSSION HE SAID "IT COULD EVEN HAVE BEEN THE RUSSIANS."

7. COMMENT: MOST OF THE DETAILS GIVEN BY THIS OFFICIAL GENERALLY CORRESPOND TO WHAT WE HAVE HEARD FROM OTHER SOURCES AS REPORTED IN REF B BUT IS THE FIRST TIME WE HAVE HEARD THE SOVIETS MENTIONED AS THE POSSIBLE CULPRIT. DESPITE ASSURANCES SECURITY THREAT REMOVED WITH ARREST OF CONSPIRATORS, WE NOTE TIGHTENED SECURITY PRECAUTIONS AROUND VARIOUS SENSITIVE GOE BUILDINGS AND EMBASSIES (INCLUDING OUR OWN) REMAIN IN FULL EFFECT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARAMILITARY FORCES, UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE, EMBASSIES, MILITARY SCHOOLS, PLOTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: blochd0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974CAIRO02549
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740097-0092
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740419/aaaaaqgh.tel
Line Count: 135
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SY
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. CAIRO 2499; B. CAIRO 2521
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: blochd0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 JUN 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 MAY 2002 by shawdg>; APPROVED <26 MAR 2003 by BoyleJA>; WITHDRAWN <13 Jun 2005 by BoyleJA, PRIVACY>; RELEASED <15 JUN 2005 by powellba2>; APPROVED <17 JUN 2005 by blochd0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ACADEMY PLOT AND POSSIBLE FEDAYEEN ACTIVITIES
TAGS: ASEC, PINS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005